

Wisconsin Shares for Children in Out-of-Home Care Placements

In the Wisconsin Shares child care subsidy program, the term 'parent' includes foster parents, kinship caregivers, a person acting in place of a parent, and custodial and biological parents. **The following information applies only to children who have been placed in out-of-home care.** Please note that families with out-of-home care placements still need to apply for the Wisconsin Shares program and may have to provide verification of their own income and must verify their approved activities.

Eligibility

- **Financial Eligibility:** Financial eligibility for foster families, subsidized guardians, interim caretakers, and kinship caregivers who have court-ordered placement and are receiving the Kinship Care payment is first based on the biological parent's income, which is tested at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); if the biological parent income exceeds that limit, financial eligibility is then based on the caretaker's income and is tested at 200% FPL.
- **Non-Financial Eligibility:** Each parent in the assistance group must also participate in an approved activity such as employment, a W-2 placement, education, etc. Applicants must provide a Social Security Number for all children who need child care assistance. Visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/parents for more information on eligibility.

You will receive a Notice of Decision stating if you are eligible for Wisconsin Shares.

Authorizations

If eligible, the next step is to contact your Wisconsin Shares local agency to request an authorization. You must be ready to tell the agency worker which child care provider you will be using. For resources on choosing a child care provider, visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/parents or childcarefinder.wisconsin.gov.

The agency worker will collect your weekly approved activity and child care need hours. **Wisconsin Shares will not issue an authorization to a provider for child care services when the child care provider and the child have the same home residence address.** Child care providers who live with a child who is receiving Wisconsin Shares may apply for a waiver to send their child to another child care provider.

If you anticipate a child being placed in your care and are waiting to apply for the child care subsidy until after the child is in your care, you can sign a Wisconsin Shares Child Care Registration (dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/forms/pdf/2835.pdf) form provided by your child welfare agency. When the child is placed with you, your child welfare agency will submit the form to the Wisconsin Shares local agency to get your application started.

The Cost of Child Care

The Wisconsin Shares authorization may not cover the full cost of child care; you may be responsible for paying any difference between the subsidy amount and the provider's price. The Wisconsin Shares copayment is an amount that is reduced from the subsidy amount. Children in out of home care will not have a copayment reduced from their subsidy benefit, but the cost of child care may exceed the amount of the subsidy benefit. That difference is the responsibility of the placement parent. For more information, visit dcf.wisconsin.gov/wishares/parents/parentfaq.

The Department of Children and Families is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need to access services, receive information in an alternate format, or need information translated to another language, please call the Division of Early Care and Education at 608-422-6002. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech disabled can use the free Wisconsin Relay Service (WRS) – 711 to contact the department.